



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

## NMFS Announces a Final Rule to Adjust Quotas, and Establish Fishing Seasons for the 2008 First Season in the Large Coastal Shark, Small Coastal Shark, and Pelagic Shark Fisheries

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces quotas and season opening and closing dates for the 2008 first trimester season quotas for large coastal sharks (LCS), small coastal sharks (SCS), and pelagic sharks based on over- or underharvests from the 2007 first trimester fishing season. Specifically, NMFS will close the LCS fishery in all regions for the 2008 first and second trimester seasons. The SCS and pelagic shark fisheries will open on January 1, 2008, and will remain open during the first trimester season, as long as quota is available (Table 1). The measures in this action will remain effective until they are replaced by those implemented under Amendment 2 to the Consolidated HMS FMP. If Amendment 2 to the Consolidated HMS FMP is finalized and effective after the start of the 2008 second trimester season, May 1, 2008, the SCS and pelagic shark fisheries will open on May 1, 2008 with the baseline quotas. As such, there will be no rulemaking establishing LCS, SCS and pelagic shark quotas and seasons for the 2008 second trimester.

During the first trimester season of 2007, the South Atlantic region landed 16.0 mt dw with no LCS quota available (-112.9 mt dw) and 28.7 mt dw (9.3 percent) of their SCS quota. The Gulf of Mexico region landed 186.9 mt dw (300 percent) of their LCS quota and 14.7 mt dw (97.4 percent) of their SCS quota. The North Atlantic region experienced underharvests for both LCS and SCS. The management measures seek to address extensive overharvests in the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico regions in 2006 and 2007 and take into consideration the results of the recent stock assessments which have indicated that a number of shark stocks are overfished and experiencing overfishing.

This notice is a courtesy to the HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of Federal Register. For further information on this proposed rule and its requirements, contact LeAnn S. Hogan or Michael Clark at 301-713-2347. Copies of the final rule and final Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis are available upon request from the Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (phone: 301-713-2347, fax: 301-713-1917). The information is also posted on the HMS website at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>.

*for Emily Menashes*  
Alan D. Risenhoover

Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

NOV 29 2007

Date

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Table 1. Season lengths and quotas for the 1<sup>st</sup> trimester season of 2008

| Species Group   | Region                  | Opening Dates   | Closing Dates                    | Available Quotas               |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Large Coastal Sharks-<br>i.e., sandbar, silky,<br>tiger, blacktip, spinner,<br>bull, lemon, nurse,<br>hammerheads | South Atlantic          | CLOSED          |                                  | N/A                            |
|   | Gulf of Mexico          |                 |                                  |                                |
|   | North Atlantic          |                 |                                  |                                |
| Small Coastal Sharks-<br>i.e.,<br>Atlantic sharpnose,<br>finetooth, blacknose,<br>bonnethead                      | South Atlantic<br>(49%) | January 1, 2008 | To be determined<br>as necessary | 354.9 mt dw<br>(782,413 lb dw) |
|   | Gulf of Mexico<br>(48%) | January 1, 2008 | To be determined<br>as necessary | 73.2 mt dw<br>(161,377 lb dw)  |
|   | North Atlantic<br>(3%)  | January 1, 2008 | To be determined<br>as necessary | 19.3 mt dw<br>(42,549 lb dw)   |
| Blue sharks   | No regional quotas      | January 1, 2008 | To be determined<br>as necessary | 91.0 mt dw<br>(200,619 lb dw)  |
| Porbeagle sharks  |                         |                 |                                  | 30.7 mt dw<br>(67,681 lb dw)   |
| Pelagic sharks other<br>than blue or porbeagle  |                         |                 |                                  | 162.7 mt dw<br>(358,688 lb dw) |

Table 2. Season lengths and quotas for the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester season of 2008

| Species Group   | Region                  | Opening Dates | Closing Dates                    | Available Quotas                |
|---|-------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Large Coastal Sharks-<br>i.e., sandbar, silky,<br>tiger, blacktip, spinner,<br>bull, lemon, nurse,<br>hammerheads | South Atlantic          | CLOSED        |                                  | N/A                             |
|   | Gulf of Mexico          |               |                                  |                                 |
|   | North Atlantic          |               |                                  |                                 |
| * Small Coastal<br>Sharks-i.e.,<br>Atlantic sharpnose,<br>finetooth, blacknose,<br>bonnethead                     | South Atlantic<br>(49%) | May 1, 2008   | To be determined<br>as necessary | 74.1 mt dw *<br>(163,361 lb dw) |
|   | Gulf of Mexico<br>(48%) | May 1, 2008   | To be determined<br>as necessary | 72.6 mt dw *<br>(160,054 lb dw) |
|   | North Atlantic<br>(3%)  | May 1, 2008   | To be determined<br>as necessary | 12.0 mt dw *<br>(26,455 lb dw)  |
| Blue sharks   | No regional quotas      | May 1, 2008   | To be determined<br>as necessary | 91.0 mt dw<br>(200,619 lb dw)   |
| Porbeagle sharks  |                         |               |                                  | 30.7 mt dw<br>(67,681 lb dw)    |
| Pelagic sharks other<br>than blue or porbeagle  |                         |               |                                  | 162.7 mt dw<br>(358,688 lb dw)  |

\* Please note that for SCS, the baseline quotas for the 2<sup>nd</sup> season are presented.